Surára
Pakidái

/2 cont./

132 Because of the nearness of the equator, it is very hot, humid, and oppressive in this region, yet not unbearable. For, on account [164] of the high moisture content of the air, there is, for example, no heat prostration and no sunstroke here. One can also sleep quite well at night, since the temperature then drops several degrees and is accompanied by a refreshing breeze. During the day the temperature of the air comes to 32-36° and at night 24-28°, whereas that of the water is usually between 29-32°.

136 As a result of the scarcity of human beings that prevails here, there are a great many wild animals and birds in the forests, in addition to the abundance of water turtles, caymans, and fish in the rivers, several species of which will be enumerated in the following:

a) Mammals: spotted jaguar (Felis onca L.), black jaguar (Panthera onca L.), puma (Felis concolor), maracajá (Felis pardalis Neuw.), tapir (Tapirus americanus Briss.), deer (Cervidae sp.), wild pig (Pecari tajacu), capybara (Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris Erxl.) paca (Cuniculus paca L.), cutia (Dasyprocta aguti L.), armadillo (Dasypodidae sp.), sloth (Bradypus sp.), ant bear (Myrmecophaga sp.) monkeys, such as the howling monkey (Alouatta sp.), cuxiú-negro (Chiroptes satanas Humb.), cuatá (Ateles paniscus L.), macaco-da-noite (Aotus infulatus), etc., sea cow (Trichechus inunguis Desmaret), etc.

b) Birds: mutum (Crax sp.), urumutum (Crax sp.), mutum-cavalo (Mitu mitu L.), jacamim (Psophia crepitans L.), cujubim (Pipile pipile cajubi Pelz.), jacu (Penelope sp.), japim (Cacicus cela L.), inambu (Crypturellus sp.), inambu-relógio (Crypturellus strigulosus Temm.), toucan (Rhamphastus /3/ sp.), arara vermelha (Ara macao L.), arara amarela (Ara ararauna L.), papagaio moleiro (Amazona sp.), papagaio curica (Amazona sp.), garça branca (Casmerodius albus egretta Gm.), gavião-real (Thrasaetus harpyia L.), gavião-caipira (Hypomorphnus urubitinga urubitinga Gm.), urubus (Cathartes foetens, Cathartes aura, etc.), etc.

c) Water turtles: tracajá (Emys sp.), cabeçuda (Podocnemis dumeriliana), etc.

d) Land turtles: jabuti (Testudo tabulata Woelb.), etc.

Sandra
Pakidai

/3 cont./

648 On the Rio Demini, slightly below the Cachoeira (rapids)
484 Auatsinaua, is the Indian protection post "Ajuricaba" (Ill. 1).
From the mouth to that point is a six-day journey in a small boat
161 with a four-horsepower outboard motor. On this long stretch
178 there are only two dozen families. Fifty years ago the banks
along the lower third were more densely settled than they are
● 164 today. But malaria and a terrible beriberi epidemic, 1907/08,
165 carried off the majority of the inhabitants. After the great forest
fire which raged along the Demini in 1926, health conditions
648 improved temporarily. In the most recent times a motor boat
164 of the National Malaria Service travels up the Demini and Aracá
once a year, and the palm-straw huts of the inhabitants are sprayed
with DDT. Nevertheless, malaria still takes its toll. Often it
also leads to a protracted liver ailment; above all, there is a
164 lack of any kind of medication. A second scourge is tuberculosis,
262 the cause of which, aside from the humid, hot climate, may
probably be traced to the poor and unbalanced diet. It consists
predominantly of manioc meal, small fish, the salted, sun-dried
meat of the pirarucu, salted wild-pig meat, and, to a considerably
smaller extent, birds and game, for the men generally do not
have time to hunt. In addition, /4/ for rubber and palm-fiber
gatherers, fruit and vegetables are practically unknown luxuries.
164 As a result of the crowded life of the individual families and the
lack of hygiene, children too are not free from tuberculosis.
Moreover, mention must be made of a dangerous eye infection
which often leads to blindness. This comes about because a fine
dust is constantly trickling down from the palm-straw roofs of the
huts, in which there are many insects, and it gets into the eyes of
the people asleep in their hammocks. An infectious skin disease
that causes light spots on the skin is also widespread. Worm and
intestinal ailments occur frequently, as does syphilis. Finally,
it is noteworthy that adults and children have very poor teeth.
[162] The reason for this may again probably be sought in the unbalanced
diet, for all of the free Forest Indians who have more variety in
165 their meals, have excellent teeth. Mortality is highest among
the children, and next come the women, a relatively large num-
ber of whom die in childbirth since there is, of course, no medical
assistance.

/57 cont./

VII. Social Organization

1. General

619

In the case of the Surára and the Pakidái, these are sovereign tribes, who, however, live together in connubium. The same extends to the friendly Xiriána /Shiriana/, Puseheweterf, Aramamesterf, etc.

648 161 [842] [164] [165] [726]

Although the Indians investigated by me have very little contact with palm-fiber gatherers or the personnel of the Indian protection post Ajuricaba on the Demini, their population is steadily decreasing for the following reasons: birth control; high infant mortality as a result of the lack of hygiene; diseases, chiefly measles epidemics (312), but also chicken pox and grippe;

> 312. In 1952/53, for example, a measles epidemic spread like a wave from the lower Amazonas as far as the Brazilian-Colombian border area and brought death to many Indians. [115] (Statement by Herr Alipio Edmundo Lage, Inspector of la. Inspetoria do Serviço de Proteção aos Índios, Manaus).

and frequent wars (313).

> 313. On the occasion of an attack on a hostile maloka, an attempt is made to kill all the men, young men, and boys, insofar as possible, while the women and girls are taken along as captives.

2. Names

551 162 [16[

The exact number of Surára at the time of my stay among them amounted to only 64 (314) and consisted of the following:

[114]

> 314. In the first reports of my investigations I erroneously gave the number as 42 (Becher, 1957a, p. 118; Becher, 1958, p. 157).

Surára
Pakidái

/97 cont./

755
759
171

498. (cont.)
I should like to mention the Kaskihá Indians in the northeastern Chaco, among whom the witch doctor tries to heal the sick in the same way (Baldus, 1931, p. 143).

164

During my nine-months' stay among the Surára and Pakidái the following sicknesses occurred there: grippe, pneumonia, malaria, chicken pox, and a gastric fever; fortunately, none was fatal (499). But the two Surára women who had pneumonia,

000

(165)
(752)

499. Only the Pakidái youth Hokotómarimá died after a fall from a pupunha palm, which probably caused internal injuries (see p. 149).

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755
759
177

But the two Surára women who had pneumonia, first a young woman, Xunamí, the wife of Kurikayawõ, the younger brother of the chief, and later an older woman, Xanimá, the approximately 47-year-old mother of Anyarawõ (see pp. 123/125), and a boy, Xaniwõ (see p. 127), about 12 years old, would probably not have survived without the penicillin that I had brought along, for, in spite of untiring treatment by the chief and his helpers, their condition grew worse from day to day. In the first instance, the chief, Hewemão, and the husband, Kurikayawõ, finally permitted me to give Xunamí a penicillin injection in the upper arm on two successive days, whereupon she improved dramatically (500). In the second and third cases,

500. This cure increased my reputation tremendously, so that afterward I was properly adopted into the tribe of the Surára and, on the occasion of the great festival in memory of the dead, was also permitted to drink the banana soup mixed with the bone ashes of deceased relatives (see p. 231). If the woman had died after the injection, however, the intervention could have had grave consequences for me.

/100 cont./

755 was much worse, that this time the power of the Waikâ medicine
123 men was extraordinarily great. I then proposed to him that I
179 should give Xunamî penicillin injections. After lengthy consultations with the husband and other male members of the tribe he consented, though with misgivings, and luck was with the patient as well as with me. From this moment on the name penicilina (Portuguese spelling) became a magic word, for it had helped to cast away the sickness. Hewemãõ even asked me to bring him a great deal of it on my next visit.

755 c) Magic cure (rekurâ) for Xanimâ:

Xanimâ, the approximately 47-year-old mother of
● [164] Anyarawõ (see p. 126), had been ill for five days with chicken
pox and had had persistently high fever. At first she, too, was
[159] given the water cures, that is, she constantly had to take baths in the river and drink a great deal of water; as her weakness increased, she remained lying in her hammock and was doused with cold water. After that there were sham battles between two "hekurâ" and the bad, black-colored spirit of sickness, "nonexî."

When there was no improvement, Chief Hewemãõ and eight helpers again arranged a large, nocturnal rekurâ, but this time a somewhat different one, because, of course, a different
[302] sickness was involved (502). At first the men, eight with red

502. As has been mentioned above (see p. 212), every sickness has very definite texts, melodies, and dance steps.

serpentine lines painted on their faces and bodies and one colored black, in the light of the hearth, again formed a circle around the large clay plate standing in the middle, on which snuff-
[296] powder had been poured. They filled their snuff tubes with generous amounts of it and blew it into each other's noses, whereupon, after a few minutes, the state of ecstasy set in. The men hopped around their own axis several times, and, after a hissing sound on the part of the chief and with prolonged shrill

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

Branco river in Brazil. They considered an agricultural life a peasant's life, and a dull one at that, with no possible appeal to the imagination. There were a few palavers about it, but it is well-known that among primitive peoples the old are listened to least: wisdom favours the youths and the boys, who have their whole lives in front of them—not behind them like a stream flowing away. The young men prevailed, and burned the forest. The first big hut was built according to Manuera's ideas, and served as a pattern for all the Shirians when they came to build.

So we too arrived at this 'big hut', which Manuera showed us with a pride that was scarcely justified, and here too the Shirians fled away into the woods, much to the amusement of our guides. We could hear them there, uttering their guttural cries of terror and wonderment.

Inside the hut there was no one, with the exception of two old folk stretched out in their liana hammocks. They didn't stir: it was as if they didn't even see us. One of them was a woman whose body was reddened nearly all over with *ebate*—a skin disease frequent among the Indians. A macaw, scared by the sight of our beards, set up a howl on his perch and started biting through the cord which attached him to it. Manuera went off into the woods, calling the others, and the thick green swallowed him up for a good hour. We were rather afraid he would want to stop here for the night, for our stomachs were turning at the filth around us, but we had misjudged our man: Manuera was now engaged in more important business and had no desire for more than a brief, benevolent survey of his kinsfolk. We very soon got back to the boat and at last were able to take deep breaths of the fresh river and forest air.

Manuera told us that the Shirians had not been really so scared by our arrival. Indeed, they had been expecting us. But they couldn't quite pluck up the courage to look close. Our stature, our beards, our clothes and our guns, in the eyes of primitive people, turned us into supermen—dread figures, terrifying as monsters and above all, essentially evil.

The news that we were on the way had been bruited abroad by the party we had met at the Moné pass—and *à propos* of this, we learned from Manuera that the spider-child had died soon afterwards, somewhere on the Sabaru. It was a relief to hear this, even if the poor little monstrosity's death had been caused by the sight of us, as the Shirians thought. Manuera's gestures became wild, and his speech difficult to follow, as he tried to explain their attitude.

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema
Ma Kiri'tare $$20

IV

Had Luis Antonio been wearing clothes, we should have pronounced him very well turned out, for he looked dark and perfectly groomed in his nudity, which was enhanced in very smart fashion by a loincloth of fiery red and a ruffle of white feathers on his right arm. In addition to his name and his knowledge of Spanish there was one other thing about him that suggested that his story might not be quite the usual one: his rotten teeth. All the Indian peoples have teeth that are very strong and brilliantly white. They are used to hard exertions on the meat the savage eats, while his fruits provide the necessary minerals, and keep their strength and colour well into old age. Luis Antonio was an exception—his teeth were no longer good: there was a long history to them, and we soon got to know it.

Uarema—Uarma, Ualema, Uadma, or Uadema were alternative forms, all very close in the Shirian pronunciation—had been a Guayca boy from the Uagna tribe. They were real warriors, forever at war with the Samatari on the other side of the cordillera. Battles were a regular feature of tribal life. When the arsenal of long-range weapons had been exhausted the armies would come to grips with clubs and sticks. During one such engagement the young Uarema disappeared into the forest and, finding himself lost, stayed all alone on the bank of the Merevari, living on fruit and worms. At the time he was probably no more than four or five years old, but the Guayca Indians are savages among the savages, and four or five is old enough for a boy to know what is good to eat in the forest and what isn't; where to find it; and how to catch it. While he was all by himself on a beach, getting a few little fish by striking at them with a stick, a Makiritari party came along, found him there, and took him with them. They were going down the Caura to sell canoes to the people on the rubber plantations at Maripa (which is almost on the Orinoco). The child, travelling with them, soon accustomed himself to their language and their Cassava bread.

At Maripa, one Martin Viudo, a rubber man who knew Guiana like the palm of his hand, saw the boy and prodded him as you would prod a spring chicken or a sucking-pig in a shop.

'A fine boy this,' he declared. 'But wicked. Wicked and obstinate, like all

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Saneema

with disinfectant, and from that time on examined their bodies carefully for the slightest little scratch. I daubed on a little red methylate, which thrilled them, as anything red does, and when I threw away the piece of cottonwool I had been using there was a regular fight for it, the winner using it to paint himself as he fancied.

But once I had started using the terramycin for the old man's benefit, an unforseen problem arose. When I displayed the tablet, this panacea for all ills, the patient (backed by all the crowd of onlookers) would make me a sign to swallow it myself, and then give another to him. In the beginning I thought that this indicated a lack of faith in the benign effect of the medicine, and some fear of poison. But I afterwards learned that it was something quite different, arising out of their peculiar conception of illness, which to them was virtually magic. Sickness was an evil something which got into a man's body and then did all its bad things. So it had to be chased out, by fair means or foul. You could frighten it away, as the magic-men did with their nocturnal exorcisms; or, by putting some substance in the body which irked it, you could make it take itself off. This was what the men-that-wear-clothes did. Either way set the sufferer free from the evil thing.

But if you chase a mouse from under one piece of furniture, it will run under another. In the same way, this evil thing, chased out of the sufferer's body, will straightway take refuge in the body of the man effecting the cure! Therefore the medicament must be ready in two equal doses, to protect both doctor and patient. I must have had to swallow untold numbers of tablets of that nauseating terramycin when treating the Samarati! Fortunately, I could always go a little way off on my own, with a call of nature as an excuse, and insert a finger in my throat to make myself vomit.

Indians as a rule present few cases of sickness: the process of natural selection has been at work among them from their infancy, destroying the weak and the handicapped and leaving the better endowed to survive. They do, however, suffer a good deal from intestinal infections; stomach parasites are present owing to the eating of rotten or windfall fruit; and there are various skin diseases due to a fungus growth of the type the Brazilians call 'bicho geographico' because of the resemblance of the infected part to a map. Mange, and sores of various kinds, complete the range of skin troubles.

But there remains that queen of epidemics, which I have not mentioned till now—tuberculosis. Its victims are of all ages. Living naked, night and day, with

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

a torrid sun or the cold dankness of the forest after dark, the Indians are especially subject to respiratory troubles, bronchitis and chronic catarrh being common. It must be a short step from these to tuberculosis, to judge by the widespread incidence of the latter, though it is worth recording that among the Samatari themselves the disease does not appear to have reached the same alarming proportions as among the Taurepàn of the Eastern uplands, where it is a real scourge. Their name for it is an onomatapoeic one—*tectecolò*—suggesting the coughing and catarrhal effects of any malady of the respiratory system, to which the word is applied.

They are more afraid of tuberculosis than of any war, or any surprise attack at night. Tribes infected with *tectecolò* become taboo, and by the same token immune from attack, because their enemies are more afraid of their tuberculosis than their arrows. I was told this by Uarema, who said that some time ago a party of their enemies (of unspecified origin) set out to attack them. They had already been several days on the march when they learned that the Guayca were suffering from a bad epidemic of colds and catarrh. They gave up their idea of attacking them, and returned to their own lands.

Wounds infected by insects can be quickly cured, the reason being that with these primitive Indians the defence-mechanism is vigorous and reacts immediately when assisted by antibiotics or sulphonamides. In this connection I have often determined by experiment the relative healthiness of the forest compared with the unhealthiness of the grasslands or savannah lying open to the sun. In the forest, damp and mouldering like some subterranean world, wounds rarely become infected, even if they are not kept clean.

I once fell down on a clay hillside, in the Upper Cuyuni country, with a machete in my hand. It was pouring with rain and everything was covered with mud and very slippery. The machete stuck into the ground as I fell forward, and my hand—as happens in the case of a fall like this—automatically tightened on the tool to help me regain my balance and slid along the blade, which was always kept razor-sharp. I had three fingers cut open right through the middle joint, the muscles and tendons being severed. We had nothing with us, not even a clean handkerchief. I at once closed my hand and bound up the fist with a bit of old rag. We then spent some days making our way down to the base-camp where we had our medicines and disinfectants. There I opened my fist, to find the cuts miraculously closed up, without the slightest sign of any infection. A

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

few days later my hand was completely healed, even though the tendons had been severed and the fingers partially paralysed.

Some antibiotic substance must surely be produced in great quantities in the soil of the dank forest regions: while in the grasslands the cycle of growth is altered owing to the effect of the sun's direct rays, which either destroy the culture or impede its development.

The most dangerous diseases are those which attack the young children and are naturally reflected in their mothers, too. Intestinal worms are the scourge of primitive populations and I have constantly observed that while among the Makiritari they affect the grown men as well, among the more primitive Shirians they are limited exclusively to the women and children, whose bellies are often swollen to an enormous size. Many of the children die at an early age from this, and from colics, intestinal obstruction, and suffocation.

Indians don't live long, even if they manage to survive the dangers that beset them in their early years. Like all primitive races, they develop precociously—the girls reaching womanhood at ten—and old age descends quickly upon them, their bodies being worn out by hard work, exposure to the extremes of weather, and anchylosis. Ancients are few and far between in any tribe: not more than one or two among some scores of men and women. The Indians whom we usually call old are not, in most cases, much more than forty.

In spite of this I have always believed in the existence of some super-ancient, some Methuselah of the Forest, an altogether exceptional individual whose organism has battled with and overcome every ill, achieving a high degree of immunity and resistance, and living on indefinitely. Certain experiences of mine with tribes of various races have led me to this conclusion.

IV

The Aracoa is a river of white water flowing over a bed of large granite stones. Near its mouth are huge falls where it pours over a solid sandstone shelf on its way to join the even clearer waters of the Uaraticoera, a little above the confluence of its sister stream the Quadu.

After a descent lasting several days, we were in camp on this sandstone shelf, with the roar of the falls in our ears, enjoying a feast of sunshine that everyone seemed to appreciate. Our chief preoccupations were the louse and the

722 /152 cont. /One day, that is to say after the aldea was ready,
499 the Bisheasetjeti also crossed; the bridge was /153/ cut by them near the bank. Guards were placed to keep a lookout for the enemy, should he try to repair the bridge and cross it.

727 Much after this, a raid was made on Liacoatjeti by some
[721] of the Bisheasetjeti and the Majecotjeti /sic/; "Jaiyeota," one of the Majecototjeti, shot one of them and killed him. A boy of four or five years of age was captured. One of the men from Majecototjeti, "Ushiu," took the boy and cared for him. All of the children were bothering the little one, calling him enemy and acting as if they were going to shoot him. One day, after this had gone on for a while, a young man from Bisheasetjeti shot the child near the water spring. He shot the arrow so hard that it passed through him. Ushiu gave the child a funeral, but none of the other inhabitants of the aldea came to the "lloro" /weeping/, because they said, "After all, he was an enemy."

628 The two aldeas had some bad times together. Often, when
722 they were in the forest, they had to come running back, feeling
578 sick. Frequently their ribs were showing. During this time
[164] several died of a strange fever which kept the victim hot day and night without relief. Others were very sick with the fever, and it
[361] was feared that they would also die. The two aldeas of Bisheasetjeti and Majecototjeti lived together for a year, until those of Bisheasetjeti made a new "farm" /granja/ down the Orinoco, on the other side of the Manaviche River. When they separated, friction caused by some women had reached such a point that the Majecototjeti summoned the Macolimutjeti, and both of them made a raid on Bisheasetjeti to recover the wife of a Majecototjeti who had gone to live with a Bisheasetjeti. One family did not take part in this raid and by its friendly and frequent visits prevented the two aldeas from shooting at each other.

628 Another incident of friction was that a young man from
578 Majecototjeti stole a Bisheasetjeti woman from her husband.
837 When the husband had almost persuaded his wife to come back with him, the Majecototjeti man shot him in the back with a bone-pointed arrow and kept the woman. The Bisheasetjeti man was seriously wounded, but recovered.

9:Grelier K-5 (1951) 1957 SQ18 Yanoama SQ 18
Waica

I tried to take some photographs of them, but they cowered back behind each other, clucking like frightened chickens, and the men gestured to me to stop. One of them, a one-eyed old man, despatched a stream of spittle from his quid into my face. 123

"*Shori! Noji!*" I protested, and laughed. I got out my comb and combed my hair and beard. He came over and examined the comb and my hair and stroked my beard. Then he, too, laughed.

"*Shori!*" he repeated.

I set about combing his crown of short bristly hair. He laughed louder and spat heartily. I slipped my arm round his shoulders and placed the view-finder of my camera against his good eye. He groaned and hopped from one foot to another, and I pressed the release. Then he laughed again and allowed himself to be photographed but he would not allow me to take pictures of the women until we had made further gifts of knives.

In the missionaries' hut, which was identical with the others, we saw the beginnings of the first Waïka dictionary. While we were there a native came up and led me to a hut where his wife was suckling a few-week's-old baby. The baby's two-year-old brother was playing in the dust with two mangy dogs as thin as a skeleton and of no recognizable breed. The child's [164] body was covered with scabs about the size of threepenny bits. Quite obviously the father expected me to do something about the affliction, and I made up my mind to give Barker some tubes of sulphonamide. Barker told me that infant mortality [165] was high among the Waïkas, adding that he had never known a child to be born or to die within the village enclosure. Since the sojourns of these people within the village were invariably brief, birth and death invariably occurred in the course of their peregrinations.

The men and youths all had deep scars on their scalps, made 142 the more conspicuous by their shaven crowns. In answer to our inquiries we were told in gestures that these came from some sort of stick or club, but whether in battle or ritual, we could not discover. (The following year King Leopoid II's [114] expedition to the same area saw similar long head-scars among Waïka women.)

415 clay pots are rapidly being replaced by aluminum ware sup-
323 plied to the few villages in contact with foreigners. These
179 [439] aluminum pots enter the exchange networks and ultimately
[438] reach virtually every village, as do machetes, axes, knives, glass beads, and fishhooks.

291 Clothing for men is limited to cotton strings around the wrist, ankles, knees, and waist; the foreskin of the penis is tied to the waist string. Occasionally men wear a string around their upper torso that crosses at both the chest and the back, and a thick cotton belt, circular in
301 cross-section, around the waist. Scalps of wild turkeys are
237 worn as fore-arm bands, to which are tied clusters of feathers
[304] that dangle from a string a foot or so in length. Men perforate the lower lip and the ear lobes; they wear a small feather in the lip and short pieces of arrow cane through their ear lobes, occasionally embellished with colored
302 feathers. Both sexes cover their bodies with red pigment and shave the tops of their heads, the latter being more common
[164] among the women. The men shave the tops of their heads to
[591] display their numerous scalp wounds, evidence of fierceness in club fights.

291 Younger women wear a cotton waist band, thick cotton armbands, circular in cross-section, a harness of cotton strings on their upper torso that crosses between the breasts and at the back, and single strings around their ankles and
[304] below their knees. Women pierce their ear lobes, the corners
[301] of their mouth, lower lip, and nasal septum. Arrow shaft

Table 2: Causes of death of 240 (adult) ancestors of the Namowei-tedi.

165
164

Stated Cause of Death[1]	Males	Females	Total	Percentage
Malaria & Epidemics	58	72	130	54.2
Dysentery, Diarrhea	16	5	21	8.8
Warfare	31	6	37	15.4
Clubfights	2	0	2	0.8
Snakebite	2	3	5	2.1
Sorcery (2)	15	10	25	10.4
Tigers	1	0	1	0.4
Chest infections	3	1	4	1.7
Hayaheri[3]	1	2	3	1.2
"Old age"	4	0	4	1.7
Pains in groin	3	0	3	1.2
Childbirth	0	3	3	1.2
Other	2	0	2	0.8
Totals:	138	102	240	99.9

[115]

1. These diagnoses were made by the Yanomamö. Some of the biological implications of these statistics have been brought to my attention by Dr. James V. Neel; I intend to discuss them in a later publication.

[73]
[163]

2. These deaths were probably due to such pathological causes as malaria. When malaria first reached epidemic proportions in some of the Yanomamö villages in the middle 1950's most of the deaths were attributed to the practice of harmful magic on the part of enemies.

3. This is a peculiar sickness associated with intense pains in the upper abdominal region; the pains may last several days. In most cases the Indians recover from this illness.

838 883 unmarried young men in Bisaasi-tedi were having homosexual relationships with each other, but no stigma was attached to this behavior. In fact, most of these bachelors joked about it and simulated copulation with each other in public. The men involved in these affairs, however, were hardly more than teenagers; I have no cases of adult men satisfying their 836 837 sexual needs by homosexuality. By the time a young man is 20 to 25 years old, his sexual interests focus on women, and he is constantly attempting to establish liaisons with women, [554] [627] [578] whether or not they have husbands. In some respects, a man's status depends on his ability to successfully carry on clandestine affairs which, when discovered, force him into [104] [554] club-fights. The number of scars he has on his scalp is a measure of his sexual prowess.

593 835 732 Rarely, a man will permit his brother to have sexual relations with his wife. In the village of Mõmaribõwei-tedi there is an achodroplastic dwarf, Yoyosiwã. Being 'ugly' (wanidiwã), he can not find a wife. One of his normal brothers permits him sexual access to his own wife. In general, however, men are jealous of their adult brothers 595 593 and do not permit such affairs. Occasionally, if a man has several wives, the wives themselves may put pressure on the husband to give one of them to the man's younger brother; co-wives, too, are capable of being jealous of each other and often resent having to share food, particularly meat. Several young men in Bisaasi-tedi have obtained their wives from older brothers because the latter could not keep peace

avoid the raids from the Patanowä-tedi, the man in question used this opportunity to have an affair with Konoreiwä's wife, presuming that he would not be discovered because the village was filled with people. He was discovered, despite his discretion, and challenged to a duel by Konoreiwä. The entire village participated in the club fight. Konoreiwä punished his wife by hitting her in the mouth with a glowing fire brand, severely burning her lips.

Finally, and most drastically, the woman shortage is remedied by raiding other villages to abduct women. This, however, is war. The ever-present possibility of this occurring, however, is a constant threat to the stability of political alliances, for allies occasionally turn on each other with the intent of seizing females. It is largely for this reason that allies cede women to each other peacefully by contracting marriage alliances. In November 1964 the Patanowä-tedi arrived at Bisaasi-tedi to participate in a feast. This was the first time the groups had gathered as groups since they separated from each other on hostile terms in ca. 1944. They intended to make peace at this feast, but a party of men from Monou-tedi, a village that also formed part of the group before the 1944 split, arrived uninvited and abducted seven women from the Patanowä-tedi. This ultimately provoked a war between the Patanowä-tedi and Monou-tedi, and determined the settlement pattern of both groups, as well as their political activities, all during my field work. The war was still being actively prosecuted when I

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Fig. 3-6. Women hauling firewood from the jungle to the village at dusk.

for suitable wood. There is usually an abundant supply in the garden within a year of the clearing of the land, but this disappears rapidly. Thereafter, the women must forage further afield to collect the daily supply of firewood, sometimes traveling several miles each day to obtain it. It is a lucky woman who owns an axe, for collecting wood is a tedious job without a steel tool. The women can always be seen at dusk, returning to the village in a procession, bearing enormous loads of wood in their pack-baskets (see Fig. 3-6). Good planners will spend a great deal of time collecting wood on some days so that they can take a vacation from this chore on others. If a woman locates a good supply of wood near the village, she will haul as much as she can and store it rather than let it be taken by her covillagers.

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Women must respond quickly to the demands of their husbands. In fact, they must respond without waiting for a command. It is interesting to watch the behavior of women when their husbands return from a hunting trip or a visit. The men march slowly across the village and retire silently to their hammocks. The woman, no matter what she is doing, hurries home and quietly but rapidly prepares a meal for the husband. Should the wife be slow in doing this, the husband is within his rights to beat her. Most reprimands meted out by irate husbands take the form of blows with the hand or with a piece of firewood, but a good many husbands are even more brutal. Some of them chop their wives with the sharp edge of a machete or axe, or shoot them with a barbed arrow in some nonvital area, such as the buttocks or leg. Many men are given over to punishing their wives by holding the hot end of a glowing stick against them, resulting in serious burns. The punishment is usually, however, adjusted to the seriousness of the wife's shortcomings, more drastic measures being reserved for infidelity or suspicion of infidelity.

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fidelity. Many men, however, show their ferocity by meting out serious punishment to their wives for even minor offenses. It is not uncommon for a man to injure his errant wife seriously; and some men have even killed wives.

Women expect this kind of treatment and many of them measure their husband's concern in terms of the frequency of minor beatings they sustain. I overheard two young women discussing each other's scalp scars. One of them commented that the other's husband must really care for her since he has beaten her on the head so frequently!

A woman usually depends for protection on her brothers, who will defend her against a cruel husband. If a man is too brutal to a wife, her brothers may take the woman away from him and give her to another man. It is largely for this reason that women abhor the possibility of being married off to men in distant villages; they know that their brothers cannot protect them under these circumstances. Women who have married a male cross-cousin have an easier life, for they are related to their husbands by cognatic ties of kinship as well as by marriage. Kaobawä, for example, is related to Bahimi as FaSiSo, and their marital relationship is very tranquil by Yanomamö standards. He does beat Bahimi on occasion, but never cruelly. It is considered good to beat a wife every once in a while just to show your concern for her.

A young man in Monou-teri shot and killed his wife a few years before I conducted my fieldwork. Even while I was there, a man in one of the villages shot his wife in the stomach with a barbed arrow. Considerable internal injury resulted when the arrow was removed. The missionaries had her sent out by airplane to the Territorial capital for surgery. Her wound had gotten infected, and the girl was near death by the time the incident came to their attention. Another man chopped his wife on the arm with a machete; the missionaries in that village feared that the woman would lose the use of her hand because some of the tendons to her fingers were severed. A fight involving a case of infidelity took place in one of the villages just before I left the field. The male culprit was killed in the club fight, and the recalcitrant wife had both her ears cut off by her enraged husband. A number of other women had their ears badly mutilated by angry husbands. The women wear sticks of cane in their pierced ear lobes; these are easily grabbed by the husband. A few men jerked these so hard that they tore their wives' ear lobes open.

It is not difficult to understand, then, why Yanomamö women in general have such a vindictive and caustic attitude toward the external world. By the time a woman is thirty years old she has "lost her shape" and has developed a rather unpleasant disposition. Women tend to seek refuge and consolation in each other's company, sharing their misery with their peers.

A woman gains a measure of respect when she becomes old. By then she has adult children who care for her and treat her kindly. Old women also have a unique position in the world of intervillage warfare and politics. They are immune from the incursions of raiders and can go from one village to another with complete disregard for personal danger. In this connection they are employed as messengers and, on some occasions, as the recoverers of bodies. If a man is killed near the village of an enemy, an old woman from the slain man's village is permitted to recover his body.

Still, the women have one method by which they can exercise a measure of influence over village politics. All women fear being abducted by raiders and always leave the village with this anxiety at the back of their minds. Women always bring their

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If such a duel is escalated, it usually develops into a side-slapping contest. Occasionally, the combatants will sue for the use of machetes and axes, but this is rare. If machetes are used, the object of the contest still remains the same: Injure your opponent seriously enough so that he will withdraw from the contest, but try not to draw blood. Hence, opponents strike each other with only the flat of the blade when they resort to machetes.

In some areas the Yanomamö modify the chest-pounding duel in another way: The opponents hold rocks in their clenched fists and strike their adversaries on the chest with an even more stunning blow. They try not to let the stone itself touch the flesh of the man they are fighting. Even without the use of stones, however, they are able to deliver their blows with such force that some of the participants cough up blood for days after having been in a duel.

Club fights represent the next level of violence. These can take place both within and between villages. Most of the club fights result from arguments over women, but a few of them develop out of disputes associated with food theft. Dikawä, a young man about twenty years old, came home one day and discovered a bunch of eating bananas his father, about fifty-five years old, had hung up in his house, above his hearth, to ripen in the smoke. Dikawä, however, ate a number of them without his father's permission. When his father discovered the theft, he ripped a pole out of his house and began clubbing Dikawä. Dikawä armed himself with a similar club and attacked his father, precipitating a general melee that soon involved most of the men in the village, each taking the side of the father or son, as they saw fit. In brawls such as these, many individuals join in the fighting just to keep the sides even; if a group is badly outnumbered, they will be joined by friends whose sense of fairness stimulates them to take sides, no matter what the issue is. The net result of the above fight was a number of lacerated skulls, bashed fingers, and sore shoulders. The contestants try to hit each other on the top of the head, but when the fight gets out of hand, the participants swing wildly and rarely hit their opponents on the skull. More frequently, the blow lands on the shoulder or arm.

The clubs used in these fights are, ideally, 8 to 10 feet long. They are very wiry, quite heavy, and deliver a tremendous wallop. In general shape and dimensions, they resemble pool cues, but are nearly twice as long. The club is held at the thin end, which is frequently sharpened to a long point in case the fighting escalates to spear thrusting, in which case the club is inverted and used as a pike.

Most duels start between two men, usually after one of them has been caught *en flagrante* trysting with the other's wife. The enraged husband challenges his opponent to strike him on the head with a club. He holds his own club vertically, leans against it and exposes his head for his opponent to strike. After he has sustained a blow on the head, he can then deliver one on the culprit's skull. But as soon as blood starts to flow, almost everybody rips a pole out of the house frame and joins in the fighting, supporting one or the other of the contestants.

Needless to say, the tops of most men's heads are covered with long, ugly scars of which their bearers are immensely proud. Some of them, in fact, keep their head cleanly shaved on top to display these scars, rubbing red pigment on their bare scalps to define them more precisely. Viewed from the top, the skull of an accomplished man of forty years looks like a road map, for it is criss-crossed by as many as twenty large scars (see

Fig. 5–1). Others keep their heads shaved for decorative reasons only, irrespective of the number of scars they bear. Some do not shave their heads at all.

Club fighting is frequent in large villages, primarily because there are more opportunities for men to establish clandestine sexual liaisons without getting caught at it. Most affairs are, however, discovered. The larger the village, the more frequent the club fighting; and as fighting increases, so too does the probability that the village will fission and result in two separate groups. Most village fissioning I investigated resulted from a specific club fight over a woman, a fight that was merely one such incident in a whole series of similar squabbles.

The village of Patanowä-teri split during the last month of my first field trip. One of the young men took the wife of another because she was allegedly being mistreated by him. This resulted in a brutal club fight that involved almost every man in the village. The fight escalated to jabbing with the sharpened ends of the clubs when the husband of the woman in question was speared by his rival and wounded. The headman of the village, a brother of Kąobawä, had been attempting to keep the fighting restricted to clubs. When the husband's rival speared his opponent, the headman went into a rage and speared him in turn, running his own sharpened club completely through the young man's body. He died when they tried to remove the weapon. The wife was then given back to her legitimate husband, who punished her by cutting both her ears off with his machete.

The kinsmen of the dead man were then ordered to leave the village before there was further bloodshed. The aggrieved faction joined the Monou-teri and the Bisaasi-teri because these two groups were at war with their natal village, and they knew that they would have an opportunity to raid their own village to get revenge. The Monou-teri and the two Bisaasi-teri groups accepted these new arrivals; they were kinsmen and would actively prosecute the war against the Patanowä-teri. The hosts, of course, took several women from the refugees, the price a vulnerable group must pay for protection.

Spears are not commonly used by the Yąnamanö. A rare form of fighting, however, does involve the use of these weapons. It is a formal contest in the sense that the fight is prearranged and the participants agree beforehand to refrain from using their bows and arrows. Fights such as these take place when the members of two villages are not angry enough with each other to shoot to kill, but are too furious to be able to satisfy their grudges with chest pounding or club fighting.

The spears themselves are about 6 feet long, lightweight, and frequently painted with red and black designs. They are merely peeled saplings sharpened to a long point at the heavy end. Each man makes several of them.

The single spear-throwing incident that took place during my fieldwork started over a woman. Her husband had been very cruel to her, so the woman's brother, the headman of one of the villages north of Kąobawä's area, took her away from him by force. This enraged his entire following, which was considerably smaller than that of the wife's brother. A club fight temporarily settled the dispute, but the smaller of the groups was thoroughly trounced by the followers of the wife's brother. They challenged their adversaries to a spear fight and notified them they were going to return with reinforcements.

The woman over which the dispute began then ran away from her brother and rejoined her husband. But the die was cast and the fight was now a matter of pride, the

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Fig. 5–1. Karïma, one of Kaobawä's daughters, picking lice out of her grandfather's battered head—his scars are from club fights. She wears decorative sticks inserted in the corners of her mouth as a beauty aid. These were inserted at about age five, together with one in the lower lip and another in the nasal septum.

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and the men ran back to the respective houses, each making a noise—"Bububububububu"—as he ran. When they reached their hammocks, they all simulated vomiting, passing out of their mouths the rotten flesh of the enemy they had symbolically devoured in the line-up.

They retired for the night. Many of them wept and moaned, mourning the loss of their friend and kinsman, Damowä. At dawn the women went to the gardens and gathered large quantities of plantains. These were carried to the raiders, wrapped with their vine hammocks, and deposited outside the village for the men to collect as they marched in single file to war.

The men painted themselves black again (Fig. 5-3). Some even put on bright red loincloths which I had traded to them, as the warrior line-up is a spectacle in which the younger men can show off to the girls. The loincloths were left behind when the men departed. They tinkered with their bows and checked to see if the bowstrings were weak at any spot, sharpened their best arrow points, and waited nervously for Kąobawä to signal for the line-up to begin again. The *waya itou* was repeated, each man marching to the center of the village and taking his place in line. This time, however, they did not sing the war song. They merely shouted, as they had done the previous night, waited for the echo to return, and marched dramatically out of the village. Their mothers and sisters wept or shouted last minute bits of advice as they left the village: "Don't get yourself shot up!" "You be careful now!"

The men picked up their supplies of food where the women had cached them and left for Patanowä-teri. Kąobawä had been complaining all year of severe pains in his lower back, abdomen, and urinal tract, and was in considerable pain when he walked. Still, he insisted on going on the raid, suspecting that the others would turn back if he did not lead it. The raiders had not been gone five hours when the first one came back, a boastful young man, complaining that he had a sore foot and could not keep up with the others. The next day a few more young men returned, complaining that they had malaria and pains in the stomach. They enjoyed participating in the pomp of the *waya itou*, for this impressed the women, but were, at heart, cowards.

The raiders travel slowly their first day away from the village. They have heavy burdens of food and try to pace themselves so as to arrive in the enemy's territory just as their food runs out. They also attempt to reach a point in the enemy's neighborhood that will permit them to reach his village at dawn: far enough away so that enemy hunters will not discover their presence, but close enough to the village that they can reach it in an hour or so from their last camp.

The men use fire only when they camp at a considerable distance from the enemy's territory. As they approach their destination, they exercise greater caution. Their final evening is spent shivering in the darkness, since they dare not make a fire to warm themselves. Most of the raiders emphasized this, as sleeping without fire is considered to be both dangerous and uncomfortable. The danger lies in the possibility of jaguar attacks, but even more in the fear that spirits will molest the unprotected raiders. On the last evening the raiding party's fierce ones have difficulties with the younger men; most of them are afraid, cold, and worried about every sort of hazard, and all of them complain of sore feet and belly aches.

The raiders always develop a strategy for attacking the unwary enemy. They usually split into two or more groups and agree to meet later at a predetermined location

If there are novices in the raiding party, the older men will conduct mock raids, showing them how they are to participate. A grass dummy or soft log is frequently employed in this, as was the case in the *waya itou* held in the village the day before the raiders left. Particularly young men will be positioned in the marching party somewhere in the middle of the single file of raiders so they will not be the first ones to be exposed to danger should the raiders themselves be ambushed. These young men will also be permitted to retreat first. Damowĩ had a twelve-year-old son when he was killed. This boy, Matarawĩ, was recruited into the raiding party to give him an opportunity to avenge his father's death. The older men made sure he would be exposed to minimum danger, as this was his first raid.

The separated groups of raiders approach the village at dawn and conceal themselves near the commonly used paths to the source of drinking water. They wait for the enemy to come to them. A good many of the victims of raids are shot while fetching water.

Frequently, the enemy is wary and acts defensively at all times when there is an active war going on. Only large groups of people can leave the village, and these are well armed. Raiders will not attack a large group such as this. When the enemy is found to be this cautious, the raiders have no choice but to retreat or to shoot volleys of arrows blindly into the village, hoping to strike someone at a distance. They retreat after they release their arrows, depending on the gossip of other villages to learn if their arrows did find their marks. Rarely, one of the raiders will attempt to enter the village during the night and kill someone while he sleeps. Damowĩ's younger brother allegedly accomplished this on one raid, but few men are brave enough to try it. Most of the time the raiders manage to ambush a single individual, kill him, and retreat before they are discovered. This is considered to be the most desirable outcome of the raid.

The women were nervous, frightened, and irritable while the men were away, and they were constantly on the lookout for raiders from other villages. This is always a time to suspect raiders, since allies occasionally turn on their friends when the women are poorly guarded, abducting as many as possible while their husbands are away.

After several days the women were so frustrated and anxious that fights began to break out among them. One woman got angry because another one, her sister and co-wife, left her to tend a small baby. When the mother returned, the angry one picked up a piece of firewood and bashed her on the side of her head with it, knocking her unconscious and causing her ear to bleed profusely.

The raiders had been gone almost a week when Kąobewĩ and his youngest brother staggered into the village, nearly dead from exhaustion. Kąobewĩ's pains had gotten so bad that he decided to turn back just before they reached the Patanowa-teri village. He could barely walk by that time and would not have been able to elude pursuers should the enemy have given chase. Shararaiwĩ, his brother, decided to accompany him back lest he run into a group of Patanowĩ-teri hunters, or his condition grow even more severe. Shortly after they had dropped out of the raiding party, Shararaiwĩ stepped on a snake and was bitten. The rains had started, and the snakes were beginning to concentrate on the higher grounds, making walking a hazard. His leg began to swell immediately, and he could not walk. Hence, Kąobewĩ had to carry him out on his back, despite the fact that he could barely walk himself. Carrying him for nearly two days, he managed to reach the Orinoco River. Here, he intended to make a bark canoe and float the rest of